



Kentucky Fish & Wildlife Commissioner's NEWSLETTER

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KDFWR archery ace Jennie Richardson wins 2 more

KDFWR's archery program coordinator and Kentucky State National Archery in the Schools Program coordinator Jennie Richardson has added another two professional women's archery championships to her already impressive list of titles.

She won the women's professional division of the Archery Shooting Association's Pro-Am Tournament in Paris, Texas March 24-25. She then traveled to Pensacola, Florida April 14-15 and won the women's pro division in the third leg of the International Bowhunting Association's Southern Triple Crown tournament.

She took a major step toward IBO Shooter of the Year honors with the Pensacola win.

Her win in Texas marked her return to competition after suffering third degree burns to her foot in February. She was wear-

ing a shoe on the injured foot for the first time in a month when she took the crown.

She donated her ASA \$1,612 first place purse to fellow archer and ASA tournament manager Bill Baker, who was paralyzed in a November tree stand accident.

After the win, she returned to Kentucky to prepare for the National Archery in the Schools State Tournament in Louisville. The tournament was a tremendous success as more than 1400 Kentucky students competed for trophies and scholarships.

She will travel to Pittsburgh next to compete in the National Field Archery Association tournament. She will then take on more ASA competition the following weekend in Augusta, Georgia.

Jennie continues to set the bar high for the rest of us with her enthusiasm for



Jennie Richardson.

the archery program and her personal achievements in archery.



Law Enforcement promotions

Commissioner Dr. Jon Gassett (left) was joined by Colonel Bob Milligan and Deputy Commissioner Hank Patton in his office last week for a formal presentation of rank. Stuart Bryant (Ninth District) and Greg Noel (Second District) were promoted to lieutenant, Chad Parker (First District) to sergeant, and Richard Skaggs (Sixth District) to lieutenant.

Kentucky's First Habitat Team



The Habitat Team truck will be wrapped with the same technology as the Wildlife Division tailgates. This preliminary design (I&E's Obie Williams) will be sure to turn heads and help promote the team and habitat message.

programs, Landowner Incentive Program, or private landowner payments.

Additional funding will be provided through the State and Tribal Wildlife grants, and we are working diligently to build partnerships with Polaris, Vulcan Materials, and John Deere.

The Habitat Team (four QU employees) will be focused in a four- to five-county area in west Kentucky. They will focus their efforts on the enhancement of Conservation Reserve Program acres, but they will also help install new state and federally funded conservation practices that benefit early successional wildlife, such as northern bobwhite, grasshopper sparrows, dickcissels, henslow sparrows, and cottontail rabbits, among others.

Management practices will include prescribed burning, strip disking, ephemeral pool creation, edge feathering, glade restoration, fencerow rejuvenation, and herbicide applications.

We are excited about this concept's potential. Pat Brandon, Philip Sharp, and Tony Black provided on-the-ground input that helped make this grant process a success. They will be working cooperatively with the team to coordinate resources and maximize workload.

This is a tremendous opportunity to make landscape-level enhancements to wildlife habitat. Ultimately, we hope to show that an industry exists for this type of service and that wildlife will respond to localized habitat management on a large-scale (i.e., thousands of acres as opposed to hundreds of acres).

Keep your fingers crossed as we move forward with this new concept!



Nine-bearded turkey

Steve Welch, of Lancaster, caused a mild stir at KDFWR Headquarters Monday when he brought in a gobbler to be scored. Staff moved in close and watched as Major David Casey and Fisheries Technician Danny Duvall measured nine beards – totaling 55 inches – on the gobbler Welch took Sunday evening of opening weekend in Jessamine County. The unique bird, which scored 146.065, was drawn to a 3-hen and jake decoy spread by a series of yelps and clucks calls.

Ben Robinson and John Morgan

Historically, Kentucky's landscape was dominated by native prairies, barrens, oak savannas, and wet meadows. These unique grassland habitats were once home to diverse plant and animal communities.

However, less than one percent of the state's pre-colonial prairies remain. Roughly five million acres of grassland exists across the state, mainly in the form of exotic pasture grasses, which are of little value to grassland dependant wildlife.

Landowners are beginning to realize the importance of restoring and managing these critical habitat types, yet many lack the equipment and expertise needed to perform the task.

Quail Unlimited (QU), in partnership with The Nature Conservancy and Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, is creating a Habitat Team designed to enhance wildlife habitat on private property in west Kentucky.

The team will be funded largely through a private grant with reimbursements generated through Farm Bill programs, state programs, or private landowners. Private grant funding will cover initial start-up costs including equipment, crew member salaries and training, with the intent that the crew will become self-sustaining through reimbursable habitat management activities including Farm Bill



Lake Cumberland Habitat Work

The recent Lake Cumberland draw-down (43 ft) has reduced the lake by approximately 13,000 acres. This reduction is most pronounced in the major embayments where productive shallow-water habitat existed.

There is now a new zone of shallow water habitat that is critically void of fish cover for many of our warm water fish species, such as largemouth bass, crappie, and bluegill.

In March, the Fisheries Division added nearly 1,000 hard and soft wood fish habitat structures to Lake Cumberland. The primary objective of this project was to add habitat to replace critical shoreline habitat for young sport fish.

In addition, anglers will also benefit as a result of the work as these structures will also provide needed structure and habitat for adult sport fish.

Southeastern Fisheries District personnel, John Williams, Marcy Anderson, Danny Parks, and Dirk Bradley, were

responsible for planning and coordinating the Division's efforts in this major habitat enhancement project.

From Tuesday through Thursday, Fisheries Division personnel used chain saws and four wheelers to cut trees up to six inches in diameter along the lake's shoreline and drag them to the water's edge where 50-pound cinderblocks were tied to them. The weighted trees were then placed on the decks of boats and moved offshore and sunk in 6 to 15 feet of water. During the week, 322, 350, 150 and 148 individual structures were added to Fishing Creek, Caney Creek, Wolf Creek and Otter Creek embayments, respectively.

Crews will continue with additional structures on a smaller scale over the next few months. The additional work will be conducted with assistance from interested sportsmen's groups.

Plans are also being made for additional habitat enhancement work should the lowered lake levels be retained over the next

The Department's Conservation Camps are in the news!

KDFWR's three conservation camps have received a lot of attention from the news media this month.

Mark Flores from WLKY Channel 32 in Louisville did a story on Camp Wallace and WKYT Channel 27 in Lexington also did a story on Camp Wallace.

Art Lander's regular Sunday column in the Lexington Herald Leader featured the camps.

WYMT TV in Hazard is running 20 30-second camp commercials each week.

On April 27th, morning feature specialist Lee Cruise of WLEX Channel 18 in Lexington will feature camps on his live morning show.

In addition to the outside coverage, Kentucky Afield has been running camp commercials throughout the month of March and April.

The department hopes that the media coverage will encourage Kentucky students to experience the fun of conservation camp.

several years. Plans are being made to conduct wildlife grass planting on dewatered flats along with the planting of hardwood saplings in these shallow dewatered areas.

These plantings will not only provide habitat for wildlife while water levels remain lowered, but once water levels return to normal levels, this vegetation will become flooded and provide nutrients and cover for the valuable sport fish species living in Lake Cumberland.

The efforts of the Fisheries Division will help to insure that essential habitat for both young and adult sport fish is maintained and enhanced at Lake Cumberland throughout the period of time water levels remain lower than normal.

This effort will insure that the valuable sport fish populations are maintained at their highest levels for all anglers to enjoy.